

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on March 8, 2005. Claims 1 – 12 are pending in the present application, with claims 3, 4, 9 and 10 having been previously withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement. Applicants amend claims 1 and 9. No new matter is introduced.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO PRIORITY CLAIM

As the priority claim and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document (JP Patent Publication No. 2000-1453971) are not explicitly acknowledged in the Office Action of March 8, 2005, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide a formal acknowledgement as to the priority claim and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the next Office Communication in regard to the present application.

OBJECTION TO DRAWING

The drawing is objected to by the Examiner. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that FIGs. 1 and 2 should be designated as “Prior Art”. Applicants submit proposed replacement sheets for FIGs. 1 and 2, in marked-up and clean form, including designations as “Prior Art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawing be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, 5 – 8, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,550,805 to Takatori et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection

In independent claim 1, Applicants disclose:

1. A method of transferring a message between a plurality of nodes forming a ring, comprising the steps of:

generating a message containing a value specifying a short path and an identifier identifying a source node of said message when the path for said message is a short path;

generating a message containing a value specifying a long path and an identifier identifying a destination node of said message when the path for said message is a long path; and

transmitting said generated message.

Takatori discloses a method for building a self-healing network (see, e.g., abstract of Takatori). With reference to FIG. 2 of Takatori, upon detecting a signal failure, a node E sends a message to a node B comprising identifiers M1 and M2 (see, e.g., column 4, lines 18 – 27 of Takatori). The Examiner suggest that identifiers M1 and M2 provide source node information, destination node information and short path/long path information (see, e.g., column 6, lines 9 – 27 of Takatori).

However, in sharp contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, Takatori fails to disclose or suggest short path and long path messages, wherein the short path message identifies a source node and the long path message identifies a destination node. Rather, according to Takatori, short path and long path identifiers are used in combination with a direction of reception of a message to indicate whether the associated message is a request message or a status message (see, e.g., column 5, lines 35 to 43 of Takatori).

In contrast to the method of Takatori, by requiring only one type of address information to be provided in each of the short path and long path messages, Applicants' invention provides the advantage of allowing for a greater effective address space (greater number of addressable nodes) without increasing message size, by sending source and destination information independently via short path and long path messages. For example, by requiring only one of the source or destination addresses to appear in each message, the address space in each message can effectively be doubled.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that their invention as disclosed in independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Takatori. As the limitations of independent claim 7

specify short path and long path messages having essentially the same requirements as the messages disclosed by independent claim 1, Applicants reapply the above arguments in regard to independent claim 7, and submit that independent claim 7 is also allowable.

In independent claim 5, Applicants disclose:

5. A method of transferring a message between a plurality of nodes forming a ring, wherein a first node identifier and a second node identifier are assigned to each node, and each node is uniquely identified by a combination of the first node identifier assigned to said node and two second node identifiers respectively assigned to two nodes adjacent on both sides thereof, said method comprising the steps of:

generating a message containing one of the first and second node identifiers assigned to a destination node of said message, the other one of the first and second node identifiers assigned to a source node of said message, and a value specifying a short path or a long path; and

transmitting said generated message.

The Examiner suggests that Takatori discloses Applicants' claimed first node and second node identifier assigned to each node. Applicants respectfully disagree. Accepting arguendo that Takatori discloses that each node and each adjacent has a node identifier (e.g., A, B, C), Applicants respectfully submit that Takatori fails to disclose each node having assigned both a first and second identifier. With reference to Table I of Takatori, the Examiner suggests that Takatori discloses that each node has an alpha designation (A, B, C, D etc.) and a numerical designation (0000, 0001, ...). However, as depicted in FIG. 1, the numerical designations make reference to a switching request name, and not to a nodal identity.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that their invention as disclosed in independent claim 5 is not anticipated by Takatori. As the limitations of independent claim 11 specify first and second node identifiers having essentially the same requirements as the messages disclosed by independent claim 5, Applicants reapply the above arguments in regard to independent claim 11, and submit that independent claim 1 is also allowable. As dependent

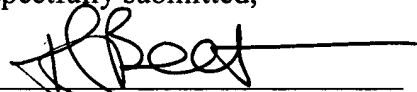
claims 2, 4, 6, 8 and 12 each depend from one of allowable claims 1, 5, 7 and 11, Applicants further submit that dependent claims 2, 4, 6, 8 and 12 are also allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1 – 5, 7 – 13, 15 and 16, which include independent claims 1, 7, 9 and 15, and the claims that depend therefrom, stand in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas J. Bean
Reg. No. 44,528

CUSTOMER NUMBER 026304

PHONE: (212) 940-8729

FAX: (212) 940-8986

Docket No.: 100794-11661 (FUJA 18.481)

TJB:fd

IN THE DRAWING:

Please accept the attached replacement sheets for Figs. 1 and 2.